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FOREWORD

Adoption of recreation as a means of promoting Social Education has helped as well as hindered the progress of Social Education. Use of recreation as an activity of Social Education has facilitated the participation of youth and adults specially the neo-literates in the programme. Recreation has provided a relief from the wear and tear of daily life, a diversion from the social and economic pressure of life of a farmer or a labourer. The worker in the field, many a time, overlooks the objective of promoting social values through the activities of recreation. Recreational activities have become synonymous with the programme of Social Education without adequate attention to the promotion of social values. The worker whilst promoting, rather propagating, social values overlooks at times the essence of recreation as a spontaneous creative expression. An average worker in utilising recreation for Social Education thus faces a dilemma. He does not know the essence of recreation. He hardly knows the technique of promoting social values as an under-current of recreational activities without undermining the essence of recreation. He mechanically uses recreation as an activity of Social Education without blending the educational, cultural and social activities in the programme. Often he begins and ends with

recreational activities. Many times, he neglects the importance of promoting other media of Social Education specially of promoting literacy. Language as a vehicle of culture should not be neglected. By giving attention to recreation and neglecting other media of Social Education the worker narrows down the scope of Social Education.

It is in this context that this publication "Recreation and Social Education" has to be read. It is a welcome effort to bring back the proper focus to the need of promoting recreation as a means of Social Education. More of such publications need to be prepared to help the field workers to utilise effectively recreation for Social Education. The effort deserves our appreciation.

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December, 1962.

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Chapter I

INTRODUCTION

Ever since the concept of Adult Education developed into that of Social Education, the role of recreation came to be increasingly appreciated. The Indian Adult Education Association devoted its fifth seminar in 1954 to the study of the role and organisation of recreational and cultural activities. The delegates assembled there agreed that these activities "can play a vitalising role in Social Education". The idea found recognition by the Planning Commission also which, in the context of a discussion on Social Education, observed in the First Five Year Plan that "the importance of providing healthy recreation cannot be too strongly stressed."[1]

The concept of Social Education itself being not very old, its relation with recreation has not so far been fully brought out in this country. In some advanced countries, on the other hand, recreation in its theoretical and practical aspects, has become a subject for an independent study. Organisations like the National Recreation Association of America are exclusively engaged in the study and propagation of recreational methods.

In India, our preoccupation with developmental work has perhaps stood in our way of

[1] First Five Year Plan.

fully appreciating the need for recreation. But as the tempo of development itself is dependent upon the quality of human material, the improvement of which is also its ultimate aim, attention has to be paid to a balanced growth of the human personality. It was primarily this realization that had led to the broadening of the concept of Adult Education leading it to that of Social Education.

At a time of transition when new complexities are being added to our life pattern, when disintegrating tendencies are discernible in old communities making traditional forms of recreation redundant, when with increasing social mobility people are finding themselves alienated in the new environments and losing their sense of belonging and when commercial entertainments are making rapid inroads even into far-flung communities, the problems of recreation can only be ignored at a spiritual and emotional peril.

"If any country needs a recreation programme that would cheer the people and bring them some joy," reports the Committee on National College of Physical Education and Recreation (1952), "it is India." It adds, "with their low economic standards, life is an unceasing struggle for the people, and nothing comes their way to provide some cheer and fun except an occasional fair or festival......... It is time that our National Government gave

serious attention to this aspect of the people's welfare."[2]

There has indeed been a growing use of recreational activities in the Social Education work. But without adequate awareness of their full import, best results cannot be expected. There is often a tendency on the part of Social Education Organisers to treat recreation as a mere thin edge of the wedge of Social Education—as if it were a means to attract crowds or to make themselves more acceptable to the people.

Recreational activities, the Fifth Seminar of the Adult Education Association came to the conclusion, were more a part of than a means to Social Education. For, "they are also in themselves socially educative."

The educative value of recreation does not lie in the morals of stories, themes of dramas, or lessons drawn from other activities presented to the people. Sermonising, in fact, kills recreation and is the worst way of education. As Mr. S. R. Slavson, an acknowledged authority on the subject, puts it, "Recreation is education in its deeper implications; for, if education, like recreation, aims to expand human personality by drawing out its potentialities and giving them strength and direction, both have the same objective."[3]

It, however, goes without saying that the two terms are not exactly synonymous. Social

[2] Quoted by Zulie Nakhooda in *Leisure and Recreation in Society*, p. 219.
[3] S. R. Slavson, *Recreation and the Total Personality*, p. 22.

Education has certainly more facets than just recreation and, likewise, recreation has many more facets than allowing itself to be used as the means of promoting social values. What needs to be emphasised is the interdependent and complementary character of the two means to the common end.

A theoretical knowledge of the role of recreation in human life is, therefore, of utmost importance for Social Education workers for making their activities meaningful.

Chapter II

PHILOSOPHY OF RECREATION

Human needs may be broadly divided into three categories namely, biological, psychological and social.[1] It is a proper balance between the satisfaction of these needs that makes it maximum and ensures integration of personality. Recreation, it will be seen, has its impact on all these aspects of human personality and its role should be studied in the context of basic human requirements.

Modern knowledge has conclusively proved that the basic drives and needs of human beings are immutable and cannot be destroyed or repressed. Any attempt to do so without providing satisfactory alternative outlets results in serious mental and physical ill-health as well as social tensions. Just as the best way to prevent a flood is not to attempt stopping the overrush of water but by regulating its flow through appropriate channels, a disciplined and balanced personality cannot be built by suppressing emotions but by offering them adequate and healthy means of expression.

As urges of individuals may clash and as satisfaction of all urges is not socially accept-

[1] Dr. S. R. Ranganathan lists them under nine heads namely: (a) material; (b) bio; (c) emotional; (d) intellectual; (e) ethical; (f) aesthetic; (g) political; (h) economic; (i) spiritual. Quoted by M. C. Nanavatty in his paper on Adult Education and Social Education (Tata Institute for Social Sciences).

able, a civilised man has to impose a number of restrictions upon himself. The value of recreation lies in the fact that it provides an outlet for the socially prohibited feelings in socially acceptable ways. While an actual romance may be frowned upon, a love song depicting similar emotions or a romantic scene on the stage may be appreciated.

From the social point of view, it is the form of expression of a human urge that matters and not the urge itself. Achievements of some of the greatest men, for instance, may be, at least partially, due to power urge or ego drive, i.e., sentiments which ordinarily are not considered noble. In a similar way a sublimated sex urge has been responsible for many a work of good art. The same urge, due to different forms of expression, results in what we call good or bad acts. The desire to excel others may prompt a person to work harder and make him achieve better results. Or the same desire may make him jealous and incite him to do injury to the interest of others. Similarly, an adventurous spirit may find expression in scientific inventions, mountaineering etc. or in crimes and murders.

On the basis of this fact, William James in his essay on "Moral Substitutes for War" has suggested the use of sports and games of rivalry to discharge drives of men that now find their fulfilment in war.[5] A German glider

[5] Quoted by S. R. Slavson: *Recreation and the Total Personality*, p. 43.

who came to India some years back to present a plane on behalf of her country also made a similar suggestion when she proposed that all foreign ministers be given training in gliding.

Though the impact of recreational activities on international political field is just hypothetical at this stage and there are no means to verify or implement the suggestions, in social life its decisive importance has been noted and experimented upon. It was not without reason that a commission to study delinquency prevention in New York City recommended, *inter alia*, extended community centres, group and recreational activities.

For the same reason, the Report of Juvenile Delinquency in India proposes "a scientific survey to measure the effectiveness of recreation centres and playgrounds in regard to the modifications of juvenile behaviour." (pp. 9 and 125)

Broadly the usefulness of recreation can be studied under following main heads:

(i) *Discharge of repressed cravings*

Desires not satisfied, due to social taboos or lack of resources and opportunities, may be forgotten by the conscious mind and a person may have apparently reconciled to it but they continue to exist as sub-conscious cravings, often working havoc in the minds of the individual resulting in distorted personalities. Recreation can help in providing satisfaction without a sense of guilt about those needs of

which a man is not fully conscious. It thus unburdens the sub-conscious mind and ensures smooth growth of the personality.

(ii) *Sublimation*

Recreation comes to its best use when it succeeds in sublimating baser desires into sublime ones. The process of sublimation consists in satisfying the same urge through an entirely different expression with totally different significance for the individual and the society. A song or a drama, for instance, can provide satisfactions to a sex-starved man while a game of chess may provide a wholesome expression to feelings of jealousy and competition. All games, in which the players use physical force to strike something, like hockey, cricket and football, release their aggressive instinct which is otherwise so dangerous to the health of the society. The spirit of sportsmanship itself is a sublimated form of primitive instinct of worsening the adversary. The sublimating role of recreation may thus be a more ennobling influence on human mind than, say, sermons or advices.

(iii) *Release of excess energy*

No work can consume full energy of a man. For, it can rarely be so pleasant as to draw out all reservoirs of energy. Every man itches to release them; otherwise they create mental tensions. Altruistic impulses, religious and social activities can often be traced to this human itch. In a similar way, adventures in

crimes and anti-social acts are also partially a gratification of this need. Recreational activities draw energy from unused parts of human personality and by restoring balance make it healthier. They are also useful in correcting anti-social and abnormal behaviour. When a person feels tired, it is rarely due to the fact that he has exhausted his energy. All that happens in most of the cases is that non-utilisation of parts of his energy causes an imbalance which in turn is responsible for a feeling of fatigue. A balanced use of energy alone can give a sense of relief.

Some people, however, need a muscular release of energy while others need mental outlets. Folk dances, mountaineering etc. represent the former while indoor games and public speeches are an instance of the latter form.

(iv) *Compensation for boredom and as an escape*

Most of the people do not get pleasure out of their work. For some it is a positive drudgery. They seek compensatory pleasure in recreational activities. In a similar way, people would like to forget the worries of daily life and enjoy themselves for a moment. The addiction to liquor and other stimulating and absorbing pursuits is an answer to this need in the absence of healthier avenues.

(v) *Growth of creative potentialities*

Everybody is gifted, in some measure, with one talent or the other which, in most cases,

remains untapped due to lack of appropriate incentives and opportunities. Pleasure and social recognition, often implied in recreations, do provide powerful incentives to bring out and develop the potentialities of many a people. A game of skill may sharpen the wits better than a sum in arithmetic. In a similar way, activities like *Ram Lila*, a dramatic performance, wall papers, fire-side chats, etc. can go a long way in making an actor, a singer, a writer and a conscious citizen out of ordinary rural folk. A congenial atmosphere around an appropriate recreational activity can likewise bring out the poet and the artist in what may otherwise be just a dull and frustrated individual.

(vi) *Satisfaction of hunger for social recognition*

Social hunger is one of the strongest human urges. Everybody craves, in some degree or the other, to be accepted and respected by the community he lives in. Desire to belong to a group or a community too is a basic need.

One of the major contributions of recreation is that it acts as a cement in social life. It brings the individual and the society into a harmonious relationship.

A recreation cannot be fully entertaining and enjoyable without company. Even an individualistic hobby like stamp collecting has a social aspect as it creates in the individual a sense of belonging to a wider fraternity of stamp collectors. Most of other recreations are

in the form of a group activity which not only round off individual angularities but also create, on the positive side, a feeling of fellowship.

The social usefulness of recreation is from two angles. On the one hand, it makes social life more pleasant and hence more acceptable to an individual. On the other hand, by transforming the individual, through the processes described above, it makes him fitter for social life.

A person suffering from a feeling of inferiority complex due to a lack of financial and political status in life and feeling jealous of the riches and position of his superiors, perhaps, need not resort to mean methods to pull them down if he gets adequate opportunities to outshine himself and get status and recognition in the fields of athletics, games, dramas, etc.

(vii) *Value for democracy.*

A democratic society must have a pluralistic structure, i.e. having many centres of prestige and power so that each individual finds an appropriate place in it. In such a society there is not a single yardstick of importance. It ensures for a writer, an actor, a singer, an athlete, a player, an artist and a poet no less a status than what is acquired by virtue of money or position in administrative and political hierarchy. It is obvious that only a widespread recreational activity can help in bringing high and low at the same level and in providing

alternative yardstick of importance. It also throws out natural leadership of the communities, which is another pre-requisite of a democratic order.

There is, therefore, not much exaggeration when an eminent writer observes that the scope and spontaneity in recreation in a nation can be used as a measure of democracy.[6]

The above discussion does not exhaust the role of recreation in human life. It, however, throws enough light on its possibilities and promises. If nothing else, even as a leisure time pursuit, as commonly understood, it makes life pleasant and more worth living.

[6] *Ibid.*

Chapter III

RECREATION AND SOCIAL EDUCATION

A Social Education worker would, after a study of the preceding chapter, readily find that in their usefulness in the growth of human personality and in increasing social harmony, the aims of recreation and Social Education are almost synonymous. This awareness should impart greater meaning and purpose to the activities he is ordinarily engaged in and should thus give him a sense of fuller satisfaction and enjoyment in his own work.

However, it would be rash to conclude that any type of recreation is good for any type of person. Just as each physical ailment needs more or less a specific medicine, recreation, too, must suit the requirements of mental health. The fact that mental and physical health closely interact on each other rather further stresses the importance of not being indiscriminate in the method of treatment.

Self-expression versus self-improvement

Again, a distinction ought to be drawn between a recreation that satisfies a genuine need and that which merely stimulates or gives satisfaction at a base level. The supreme aim of recreation is self-expression. But unless self-expression helps to improve the self, it is not of much use. As pointed out earlier, the satisfaction of desires can be transformed

through knowable processes. It is the job of a conscious recreationist to find out those avenues which not only give adequate satisfactions but also sublimate some of the desires. Thus, while nude pictures and vulgar novels and films may stimulate sex desires, music and art may sublimate it. The former is a case of mere self-expression, the latter is that of self-improvement also.

Occasionally, however, a mere gratification may be necessary. Providing an occasional drainage to the pent-up emotions may be as much useful for mental health as relief of physical pains through sedative drugs. There are provisions in each culture for such safety valves which legitimise outbursts of abnormal behaviour on some occasions. On festivals like Holi, men and women of all ages mix freely and disfigure one another's faces without inhibitions. On other seasonal festivals, too, the normal rules of behaviour are set aside for a moment.

However, it is obvious that temporary palliatives cannot be relied upon for permanent cures which have to be worked out with full awareness of the ailments as well as the cures available.

Wider perspective

An elementary knowledge of human psychology, of the basic drives and urges of man, coupled with the knowledge of the possible impacts of various recreational activities on

human personality, is an essential asset of a Social Education worker. For, it is only when he is armed with this knowledge that he will be able to use recreation as a means for the attainment of the objective of Social Education and make it a complementary rather than a competitive activity to other activities in this field. Thus organically linked, each activity should induce among the participants an interest and urge for participation in other activities. As Social Education itself is not an isolated field in the social life of the community but has to be undertaken in a broader context of developmental and other activities in any area, recreation, too, should fit in the general pattern of life not only from the point of view of time-table and organisation but also from that of the requirements of the people. Thus a Social Education Organiser should always have a sense of wider perspective while planning his activities.

Needs of men and women, young and old, rural and urban communities as also of various professional and psychological groups vary considerably. A recreationist has to take note of peculiarities of each group and, as far as possible, of each individual in a group. He has also to work out co-ordination and adjustment with any other official or voluntary recreational or other activity organised for or by the people among whom he is working.

Chapter IV

TYPES OF RECREATION

It is not proposed to give here a catalogue of recreational activities. For, every Social Education worker is supposed to have some knowledge of the prevalent activities in his area to which he can add a few more known to him otherwise. Moreover, it is difficult to draw a very precise line between what is recreation and what is not. It is not an activity as such that is recreational or otherwise. It is only when it serves a specific purpose that it becomes recreational. A public speech or a religious discourse, for instance, cannot ordinarily be classified as a recreation. But to the extent it provides an opportunity of self-expression and growth of personality and is pleasure giving, it is not without recreational value. Similarly, the work of a football coach, a professional actor or singer is essentially not recreational.

A recreational activity is thus that the chief motive of which is not money but pleasure and satisfaction of muscular, neural and psychological urges.

A Social Education Organiser should endeavour to impart a recreational touch to most of his activities so that the people served by them feel pleasure in what they learn and do.

In this chapter, an attempt is being made to discuss types of recreation from the point of view of broad categories of groups.

Keeping in view the obvious limitations of broad categorisation, the recreational types can be studied, firstly from rural and urban angles. For, there is a sufficient difference between environmental and cultural backgrounds of urban and rural areas to permit some generalisations about their respective distinct needs.

a) Recreations for town dwellers

The recreational problems of the towns are comparatively more complex for a variety of reasons. While the traditional way of life is no more sacrosanct, newer values and patterns have not yet taken roots there. Moreover, most of the big towns are a conglomeration of heterogeneous populations as the immigrants not only belong to different classes but also to different linguistic regions. Further, the town life, being more congested and hectic, gives little opportunities and leisure to its inhabitants for recreation. It is no wonder that with its obvious operational advantages in the towns, the invasion of the commercial recreation has almost killed the spirit of spontaneous recreation there.

The growing frustration in the urban youth, student indiscipline, juvenile delinquency, immoral traffic, illicit distillation, increasing incident of neurosis and mental diseases and

numerous other vices in the towns and cities of India today can perhaps be directly traced to the lack of recreational outlets to their people.

Unlike his rural counterpart, a town-dweller is a passive participant in most of the recreational activities available to him. For urban recreation is normally outside the daily routine of life. One has to go to a garden, a cinema or a cricket match to see others entertaining him. Whereas recreation in rural areas is woven around festivals during sowing, harvesting or around social institutions of marriage and even death. Recreation, in rural society, is a part of a normal individual and communal life.

Another characterstic of the urban life is lack of a sense of belonging and rootedness. A modern man lives as an alien in his street and attends his office in an equally unhomely and formal atmosphere. He has neither time nor finds atmosphere congenial for deep and lasting attachments or loyalties. He is, as Reisman pointed out, a member of a lonely crowd.

The job of a recreationist in the towns is primarily to relate each individual to a group. Neighbourhood societies and mohalla associations need to be encouraged. Organisations representing regional cultures of the inhabitants of the metropolis, too, have a useful role to play in creating a sense of belonging. For, a sense of common language and culture not

only leads to a sense of belonging but also provides means for self-expression to those who have little proficiency in a language other than their regional language. It goes without saying that care should be taken to avoid sectarianism or parochialism in such organisations. The best way to do it would be to help these organisations in knowing and establishing contacts with one another. They could, for instance, play host reciprocally to other groups on the occasion of their respective festivals.

As city life is complex and many-sided, each individual will need a plurality of institutions to find fuller self-expression. Thus a worker may simultaneously be a member of the trade union of his factory, mohalla committee, football team, a religious gathering and so on. It is not necessary for every man to physically belong to a group. Intellectuals and educated people, though sometimes leading isolated lives, find kinships through loyalties to ideological movements.

The problems of urbanisation are, in fact, too numerous and complex for our present study, and Social Educationists alone cannot fully answer them, particularly, at their present state of organisation and resources. But even though they may be required to deal with only a fragment of the problem, they cannot lose sight of the wider picture.

Community singing, community dinners, celebration of religious and national festivals are useful activities from the point of view of

the problem discussed above, namely, of creating a sense of belonging. If the Social Education centre happens to be located in the colony of the office-clerks, some physical activities may be necessary to compensate the drudgery of their mental work in the office and to discharge their frustrations through violent muscular strokes. Subject to availability of space, modern outdoor games like cricket, football, tennis, badminton can be introduced. For factory workers, songs, dramas and indoor games may better complement their regular work and compensate their deficiencies. Occasional picnics for both the social groups would serve to provide an escape from the dins of town life as also to develop a feeling of fellowship and belonging.

Social Education workers will rarely be called upon to take up the problems of other social groups of the towns. The aristocrats and intellectuals will perhaps not care for them and while the former would manage to organise aesthetic activities like flower and fashion shows, the latter would not find it difficult to organise discussions and seminars. Groups of small shopkeepers may, however, need some attention. They can be expected to spare some time only on weekly close days. They need activities which enable them to relax and which absorb them sufficiently to make them forget for a moment their long dreary hours of work on week days. Playing cards, chess and films are exceptionally popular with this

class. This semi-educated class has half-starved intellectual curiosities also and a small gossip about week's political and social developments coupled with occasional informative talks would be quite palatable to the members of this class.

Though the First Plan admitted that the problem of healthy and cheap recreation was more acute in the towns than in the villages, not much headway has so far been made in this matter. Many important towns still do not have a well-organised Social Education movement while where it exists, it does not cover more than a fraction of its population. However, the problem has started attracting the attention of our planners and sociologists. A pilot project of urban community development recently started in Delhi may, if successful, pave the way for its extension to other towns.

In this connection, the remarkable results achieved by three night shelters in Delhi may be mentioned. Known as "*Rain Basera*", they were just meant to provide shelter to homeless pavement dwellers, belonging to the poorest class of the capital. Small recreational activities were also added. This is said to have resulted in a miraculous transformation in their lives, living standards, ethical behaviours and general attitude. They now have a sense of belonging and a purpose which makes all the difference between a frustrated anti-social man and a useful citizen.

b) Recreations for rural folk

As a preponderant population of India lives in her villages, the sheer vastness of their problems should call for a high priority. In view of his far greater opportunities and influence in the villages, the role of a Social Education Organiser, too, is much more crucial there than that in towns. Moreover, luckily we are still in a position to take the situation by the forelocks as far as the rural life is concerned. Though it, too, is in transition, it is still at a stage when it can be helped to grow in an orderly and healthy manner. Thus, while the role of recreation in a town is more of a curative and preventive nature, its main job in a village is to stimulate growth.

The mainstays of mental hygiene of the rural folk are traditional recreations and festivities, not consciously evolved but handed over to them through generations in response to their sub-conscious needs. They engage themselves in these activities not out of conviction in their usefulness but rather as a religious or social obligation. Little wonder that some of them have survived their utility.

The job of a Social Education Organiser in a village is not so much to invent or introduce new recreational activities as to draw upon the traditional reservoir and to rejuvenate them. In some cases the traditional activities may have ceased to meet the changed requirements or may have degenerated and become wasteful. Some modifications and reforms, in such

cases, may restore their usefulness and should be fully tried before discarding them.

The relation of an individual to the community presents another contrast in town and village life. While in the case of the former moral behaviour lacks strong social sanctions, in the latter case every behaviour of an individual is noticed and scrutinized.

The powerful taboos and eternal vigilance of the community lead to accumulation of repressions which need rather violent and unsophisticated outlets. Fortunately, every rural culture provides safety valves for the discharge of repressed emotions. Behaviour which normally would be condemned as vulgar becomes tolerable and even respectable at the time of seasonal fairs, when one can witness scenes of hilarious outbursts and riotous gaiety. In some places, particularly remote from urban influences, mixed dances are still prevalent. In other areas, men dress themselves in the garb of women and try to fill up the deficiency.

The work of Social Education should be built around these spontaneous activities in the countryside. Social Education Organisers should endeavour to restore their respectability and to counter the tendency of town-returned, half-educated, new aristocracy of the villages to look down upon them.

There should indeed be scope for vast improvements in the fairs and festivals. But that presumes association of decent people with them and a belief that they are essentially

useful activities in themselves. They have not to be exploited for other purposes, say propaganda for government schemes, but other purposes have to be made complementary and subsidiary to the main activity whose basic spirit should not be allowed to be overshadowed.

Depending upon the mood and receptivity of the people and the needs of the occasion, films and slides can be shown to the audience of the fair. They can also be helped in composing and learning better songs, preferably in their own language. It may be pointed out that a better song need not be judged by merely the moral of its theme. Its music and rhythm are no less important. Development of aesthetic sense and opportunities of self-expression also contribute to the richness and fullness of life. Of course, if without violating these virtues, songs and dramas can become instructive, it will be an additional value.

Besides, lending a helping hand to the organisation of traditional fairs and festivals, a Social Education Organiser should also arrange regular recreational activities as a part of his general Social Education work. By a careful planning, the distinction between recreation and other activities of Social Education can be minimised so that recreation becomes instructive and instructive programmes become recreational.

A literacy class may be followed by community singing and may be preceded by reci-

tations of poems and stories. This programme can be intercepted by debates and dramas also. In this way the work of the literacy class will tend to become somewhat recreational while the entire programme will form an integrated picture.

The emphasis on indoor and outdoor games should be varied according to busy and slack season in agricultural operations. During times of harvest and ploughing, for instance, a further physical activity may be tiresome for the farmers while indoor games may relax them. When the peak season of work is over, physical activities would be needed to stimulate their muscles. A proper balance between mental and muscular exercises alone can keep the body fit.

A special need of rural recreation is individualisation. While the emphasis in towns must be on relating individualistic and unadjusted citizens to a group, in villages it is more important to reduce too much dependence on the community. In both places, the ultimate aim, however, should be to establish a harmonious relationship between the individual and the society.

The activities that help individual initiative and self-confidence include *akhara*, atheletics, gymnasium, most of the indoor games, recitations of poems and songs and in fact all those activities in which group action is not necessary and every individual has an opportunity to make his mark.

It may be pertinent at this stage to sound a warning against rash introduction of urban games and urban concepts into rural settings. For, not only these concepts get distorted in the process, their imposition on unnatural environments also kills the spirit of spontaneity —the soul of recreation.

Recreational needs may be studied from the angle of other classifications also. Men and women as also young and old do have distinct characteristics to merit separate treatment.

c) Recreational activities for men and women

Modern age is steadily reducing the difference in the life of men and women. They are approximating to each other in their work, tastes and dresses. Another revelation made by the psychologists, in this context, is that nobody is a cent per cent man or woman. Element of femininity in a man and of masculinity in a woman varies in each case. It is this element of other sex that drives men and women to adoption of each other's professions. As a large proportion of Indian women does not get opportunities for professional life, they may occasionally need satisfaction through activities with a masculine touch. This purpose may be fulfilled through dramas in which women provide the male cast also by dressing and acting like men.

Then, some urges are too human to have male or female characteristics and need more or less similar satisfactions for both the sexes.

Women need as much as men do to discharge their aggressiveness and if they are provided opportunities for doing so, many a husband and a child may be spared of their wrath. And if competitive games could sublimate part of their instinct of jealousy, their neighbourhood relations may markedly improve.

The recreational starvation of the Indian womanhood, particularly, of urban middle class, is partially responsible for a lack of harmony in many families and for their proverbial quarrelsomeness. Apart from social educationists, husbands and fathers may find it worth their while to provide for the satisfaction of this vital need of their womenfolk.

Making all the allowances for the masculine and basically human traits, the hard core of womanhood does have distinct womanish characteristics and needs specialised treatment. Even though instincts like love and security are common to both sexes, in the case of women, they are perhaps more pronounced. For this reason, they have a far greater sense of dependence and can rarely live alone.

The irresistible appeal of religion and deep attachments that a woman ordinarily develops are also due to this very reason. The rationalistic influences may weaken this appeal but may not always offer alternative outlets. Till her religious faith is intact, a programme of *bhajans*, *kathas*, *satsang* and *kirtans* should form an inevitable part of female recreation.

The loyalty and attachment of a woman is often narrow, rarely transcending her children and parents. In urban societies, where she has ceased to be submissive, it is becoming difficult for young girls, for this reason, to find an adjustment with their in-laws or even with their husbands, from whom they demand an exclusive loyalty in return. Recreation is a useful device for enlarging interests as well as for making one more adaptable. Knowledge of a wider world, sense of belonging to a wider group, activities involving partnership and association, on the one hand, to expand their horizons and individualistic hobbies to build up a capacity for living independently, on the other, can lay the foundations of a mature personality of Indian women and of their happy homes. Newspaper reading, radio listening or narration of a simplified and summarised news items of the day or the week may help in widening their knowledge about the world. Games, whether modern or traditional, in which players are divided into teams, may be used to inculcate a sense of partnership and association while habits like reading, singing, knitting etc. develop individuality.

This is certainly not entirely the job of a Social Education worker, partly because of the organisational inadequacies of the Social Education movement and partly of the social backwardness of the Indian women, which does not concede them a greater role than bearing

and rearing of children. No significant headway has so far been made, whether in towns or in villages, to cover the field of women by the movement. In towns, Social Education itself touches only a fringe of the population. In villages, lack of women staff is an additional handicap.

As Social Education aims at an all-round development of a community, it cannot ignore a vital section of its population. Where lady organisers have not been appointed, male organisers should not leave this field untouched. With the help of *gram sevikas*, teachers, social workers, if available, and old ladies of the locality, suitable activities on the lines suggested above should be started for women. The usual excuse of non-availability of time will not hold as soon as women find the programmes interesting and become aware that they relieve their fatigue and enable them to do much more work without irritations and tensions.

While searching for suitable activities, it would always be found profitable to draw upon the traditional source as that would reduce organisational efforts and may have more chances of acceptability. All that the Social Education Organiser has to do is to add a sense of meaning and significance to these activities and to link them with overall objectives.

The advantages of mixed activities are controversial. In a field like this, where voluntariness and willing co-operation of the

people count far more than anything else, no attempt should be made to challenge prevalent prejudices directly. However, under the supervision of the elders of the community, men and women of an area should get together to celebrate certain occasions. The effect will be more wholesome, if it is a get-together of families and not of individuals.

d) Recreations for various age groups

Yet another way of looking at the problem of recreational types would be from the angle of age groups. Physical needs and tastes vary with age. So is the case with psychological attitudes. As the job of recreation is primarily the satisfaction of basic human urges, it has to take cognizance of the variations therein.

People do not grow with the same speed; some become older much earlier than others. Again, psychological growth, in some cases, does not correspond with the physical growth. Some grown-ups also have infantile urges. Whether they were starved of child-like recreations during their childhood or their personality got fixed up at them, many an adult craves to act like children and feels pleasure in activities normally meant for them.

Besides these aberrative and marginal behaviours, a note of which should indeed be taken, general tendencies of some broad age groups can be sketched so that corresponding activities can be planned.

Children, young boys and young girls, adults and old persons do have sufficient separate organic and psychological characteristics to mark them off from each other on the basis of recreational needs.

i) Children

For a child, recreation is indistinguishable from education and his other activities. The spread of kindergarten system of education is a recognition of this fact. As the child grows, it becomes conscious of distinctive significance of each activity. The present system of education further fosters that sense by completely separating education from games and play. By the time he reaches college, he is left to himself to seek recreational outlets as very few colleges look after this need. In the case of grown-ups the gulf between work and recreation is still wider. For, very few of them find any pleasure in their work and rarely any employer cares to provide recreational facilities to them.

Though the principle of making recreation utilitarian, so to say, and making work pleasant so that both approximate to each other, should be applied to all stages of human development, there should obviously be more scope for conscious and planned effort in the case of less advanced stage. As the child grows, direct guidance should give place to indirect one so that his sense of initiative and self-confidence is fully called upon.

The greatest need of a child is activity and movement. He needs open space and objects which he can throw, manipulate and break. Inhibitions about too much cleanliness, too much order, too much carefulness in handling things and against making noise are apt to retard his physical growth. An opportunity to build and break models of mud or clay should be a useful pastime at this age.

Soon the child becomes inquisitive and finds purpose in his plays. Books that answer his inquiries or demonstrate how to play with certain toys and mechanical devices, too, should form part of his recreation. At this stage he does not throw about his toys but is interested in getting a regular game out of them. He feels particular delight in assembling type of toys where his creative spirit comes to play.

The child then starts becoming 'social' and takes interest in games requiring team spirit. He needs company of his own age. Picnics, travels and visits to historical places, museums etc. too should be fascinating now and could be used as educative devices as well.

ii) Adolescents

By adolescence, deep-rooted friendships are formed. It may be more useful to treat the youth as a group of friends instead of as individuals. This is a time when very vigorous, physically strenuous and mentally absorbing activities are needed to steam off some of the exuberant youthful energy. Outdoor games

like football, hockey and cricket in towns and *kabadi*, *kho-kho*, *akhara* etc., in villages are particularly suitable at this age. Mountaineering, hiking, shooting, camping should also prove attractive to the youth and provide an outlet to its adventurous spirit and develop a group spirit. Social and constructive use too could be made of youthful yearnings by providing opportunities to act as scouts, cadets and volunteeers.

Feelings of social hunger and urge for recognition also manifest at this stage and can be a very powerful motivation for social service, public work and a life of selflessness and sacrifices. The urge for being known or to find one's name in print should be provided an expression through debates and college magazines or even wall papers and should be used to spur faculties of public speaking and writing.

In a similar way, the students camping outside the towns may not mind spending part of their spare time in literacy work, sanitation and even doing some manual work, viz. building roads, and digging canals. Just fun of work, sense of achievement or recognition and appreciation should be sufficient incentives for some of the socially useful activities of the young men and women.

The treatment of the problems of youth and childhood, for our present purpose, has to be as sketchy as above. For, the Social Education movement is meant, at present, to directly

embrace grown-up sections of our people. Nevertheless, a discerning organiser will find in the group he is dealing with some traits of personality discussed in the preceding paras and may make use of the suggestions emerging from the discussion. Secondly, as he is supposed to be a friend and guide of his fellow-men, he may be called upon to give counsel on the problems of their young ones. Moreover, as is suggested elsewhere, recreational activities in the form of group of families has great advantages. An elementary knowledge of the needs of the various members of the family would, therefore, be essential for organisation of activities on a family basis. If, at some stage of his work, a Social Education Organiser feels the necessity of a fuller knowledge about the problems of children and young men, he may refer to the vast literature specifically published on the subject.

iii) Adults

Some adults are merely grown-up children while others do retain some sparks of youthfulness. But they are supposed to observe certain restraint in their behaviour and to have developed some maturity in their outlook. Weighed upon by heavy responsibilities, their thoughts do not automatically go towards recreation; nor can they always afford enough time for that. Moreover unlike children and youth, adult recreation has hardly been treated a social responsibility. The growth of the Social Education movement too has not so far

been able to provide a pride of place to this vital human need for numerous reasons.

Recreational activities for adults should be developed around literacy classes so that the two tend to mix up. Some of the activities could be so devised as to stimulate interest in reading and writing. Educational curriculum should, on the other hand, be so adopted as to make the fourth R of recreation as essential part of it as the other three R's are.

Keeping in view other differentials that divide adults, generally speaking, their activities should be somewhat less strenuous, more individualistic, better informed of a social purpose, and should involve less of guidance and planning by the organisers.

Vigil Dahl, in "Community Reports—Current Problems in Recreation", suggests the following three objectives for adult recreation programme.

1) To give the individual an added interest in life through opportunity for self-expression, self-improvement and development.

2) To help the individual adjust himself to his environment and group.

3) To place in the community well-balanced individuals capable of sharing group responsibility.

It will thus be seen that the adult programme varies from that of other age groups mainly in its emphasis on social aspect of his life. Recreation for an adult should be more than plays

and games. It must create in him an awareness about the world he lives in and should enable him to assume some social responsibilities. It should train him as a citizen, as a voter, as a neighbour and as a head of the family.

Discussion meetings in which members of the group freely participate and the organizer is not keen on imposing his views and confines himself to merely supplying objective information on the subject, is one way of creating social awareness. Documentary films, radio programmes and dramas too have educative-cum-recreational value.

Even purely entertainment activities acquire a social significance if the initiative in organizing them is passed on, to the maximum extent, to the members of the group.[7]

iv) Old

The final group, of old people, too cannot be distinguished very clearly from the preceding one. Moreover, oldness, for our purpose, is not only a function of age and physical state but also of temperament.

An impression somehow persists that entertainment and enjoyment are a prerogative of only less grown-up people and older people are supposed to lead more or less a dull life. It is obviously an over-simplified view of the problems of old age which too has its worries that

[7] For a fuller discussion of adult needs of Social Education, see M. C. Nanavatty's paper on Adult Education and Social Education.

need compensations. Moreover, with greater leisure time at their disposal, older people are in dire need of activities to utilize it.

At the fag end of their life while some may be haunted by the memories of what they were once capable of doing, others may be bemoaning the opportunities missed, hopes belied and dreams unfulfilled. Yet another set of aged people may not even now be feeling comfortable over the treatment meted out to them by their daughters-in-law or sons. The worries of any member of the household are also after all theirs.

An old man yearns for respect which is certainly his due. He becomes cynical if he is neglected or considered to be outmoded. His isolation has to be overcome by providing a bridge between him and the rest of the society. Some of the elders are eminently fitted for the role of leaders of recreational and other social education activities. This way they will be able to satisfy their own yearnings but will also meet a vital need of the rural community. Appropriate men should be available from this class for the role of say, an umpire, a chairman, a supervisor, a story-teller etc.

It may not always be possible to satisfy all the idiosyncrasies of older people. But there are always some among them who are appreciative of the desires and needs of the younger people and would be too happy to lead or guide their activities. In the case of others too,

they should be encouraged to make adjustments with the newer currents represented by the younger generation. Even if such efforts fail they need not be offended but should be tolerated and treated with courtesy.

Physical activities for this age group have, of course, to be very light depending upon their fitness. A small walk, a fireside chat, games of chess or cards, reading books, attending *kathas*, or lectures would do for most of them while some on occasions may like to try more vigorous pursuits.

Arbitrary Classification

In the foregoing discussion of the recreational types for various classes of persons, an element of arbitrariness would be apparent in the system of classification adopted. For, firstly, no person appears to belong cent per cent to a particular class and, as pointed out at the relevant stages, an urban person may not have fully outgrown his rural background, a man may have some feminine touches, and finally a grown-up person may exhibit some infantile instincts. Secondly, one type of classification cuts across another type. Urban women may for instance have more in common with their counterparts in the villages than with their opposite sex in the towns. Thirdly, the three types of classifications, taken note of so far, do not exhaust the differentials that divide human beings.

Apart from distinctions based on economic, social and educational status, cultural backgrounds and regional characteristics, men could be studied in some definite psychological categories also. One such categorization may be that of introverts and extroverts. While the former tend to withdraw and prefer isolative activities, the latter are more communicative and prefer associative activities. Hobbies, artistic work, and other self-centred activities suit the former while group activities and playing in teams suit the latter. A similar distinction could be drawn on the basis of the degree of aggressiveness, repressions, and other psychological attributes. Inherent differences in intellectual capacities, variations in talents and aptitudes too are of vital importance while choosing recreational activities.

While these distinctions cannot be brushed aside, they have been impliedly taken account of in the general treatment of the subject on every relevant occasion. The main reason for a concentrated reference to the three types of classifications is that they are more distinct and more objectively knowable. Moreover, as a different set of personnel is usually available to attend to each of these classes, a separate discussion would be to their convenience.

A broad conclusion may, however, be legitimate, viz., though basic human instincts are universal, each individual has some uniqueness. No group can completely represent its members in all aspects of their lives. As no amount

of organisation or generalization can enable the Social Education Organizer to read individual minds exactly and to evaluate his needs very precisely, freely expressed individual preferences and interests should be a valuable guide for his planning.

Chapter V

INDIVIDUALISATION AND COOPERATION

Even at the risk of being redundant, the vital place of individualization in recreational programmes needs be stressed afresh. For, it has an important bearing on the scope of democracy in a society.

By now the impact of recreation on the life of a nation and its individuals should be fairly obvious. As we are avowedly struggling to build up a democratic order and as its foundations have to be laid in all walks of life, the role of recreation may be studied from that angle also.

Democracy can be distinguished from totalitarianism mainly for its emphasis on the individual who is the end and measure of all social activities. In totalitarian countries, an individual has no distinct and significant value and is treated just as a means for the glorification of a state, a party, a class or a nation.

Again, totalitarianism is not always a rule imposed on an unwilling people. It is often the result of a certain attitude of mind by which individuals lose their self-esteem and start considering themselves insignificant.

Activities on a mass scale in which hundreds and thousands of individuals forget their entity, in which they have neither an initiative

in the organisation nor have a sense of active participation, and are stimulated by powerful appeals to their emotions—often base emotions —may offer some entertainment and people may be voluntarily drawn towards them. But by reducing individuals to cogs of machines, such activities groom them for totalitarian yokes. It is no wonder that recreational activities have adopted this very pattern in all those countries where democracy, as understood by us, has ceased to be a virtue.

Commercial recreation, too, has unfortunately similar disadvantages. But as element of voluntariness is more pronounced and as one can manage to have a small company of one's own in the larger audience, one is not so completely lost.

Group versus Mass Activities

The contrast between group activity and mass activity may bring out the point more clearly. The group provides avenues of self-fulfilment to its members and by creating a sense of belonging among them and satisfying their social hunger promotes their mental health. The members establish active relationships amongst themselves with varying degrees of attachments which enable them to become significant. In mass activities, on the other hand, individuals do not belong to one another. They just merge themselves into a vast sea of unknowns. They are not related to one another. Each is directly related to an abstract

collectivity and in this relationship realises his insignificance.

The terms like 'group' and 'mass' have been used here in a special sense. It is not only the number of persons involved that distinguishes one from the other; the type of activity, too, is equally important. The degree of active participation by the members in any activity is indeed crucial for this differentiation. From this point of view, incidentally, showing of slides and films, lectures, dramas and performances by outside professionals have only limited recreational usefulness.

Living Alone

Notwithstanding the necessary role of a group in the life of an individual, it should not be allowed to create a sense of too much dependence in the latter. The capacity to live alone, if it is not borne out of eccentricities, is a sign of maturity and an individual who cannot live without a company is indeed a poor personality. Recreational activities should also be directed towards building up a reserve for living independently. Hobbies like gardening, photography, stamp collecting, artistic pursuits like painting, versification, singing and intellectual interests like reading and writing do help in developing those faculties by which a man can live at peace with himself without restlessly craving for a companion all the time. Of course, the other extreme of shunning all company too is not

very healthy. A man at peace with himself as well as with the society around him alone should be considered a healthy man, mentally speaking.

In fact, group activity and individual activity should be complementary to each other and a right proportion of the two should help in developing self-reliant, social and co-operating personalities who alone can comprise a democratic society.

Co-operation versus Competition

Again, group activity has two aspects—co-operative and competitive. Not much thought seems to have been given to the comparative virtues of these; and most of the recreational activities incorporate both of them indiscriminately. Further, co-operative activities are of two kinds namely, involving co-operation within a group and co-operation between groups. Matches of games and plays are an illustration of the first kind, while joint picnics and reciprocal invitations to celebrate functions are instances of the latter. Besides competition between groups, some activities encourage competitive spirit among the members of a group also. System of awarding prizes and certificates for individual performances can introduce this spirit into any field of activity.

Recreational activities in the educational institutes as well as in the Social Education movement do put a premium on competition

these days. This is done perhaps to stimulate energies of the participants and to provide an extra incentive in the form of prizes and positions. In fact, it is just an extension of the modern competitive social life.

It is true that competition is one of the basic human urges. But co-operative spirit, too, is perhaps equally basic and is decidedly a more wholesome sentiment, individually as well as socially. If the choice is simply between the two, there should be an obvious preference for those activities which breed a spirit of co-operation. That co-operative way is no less effective in stimulating individuals is brought out very clearly by Professor Edwin A. Kirkpatrick in his book entitled "Mental Hygiene for Effective Living". He says:

> "The fact that a great variety of abilities may often be utilized in co-operation gives a chance for more individuals to succeed and to contribute to worthwhile ends. For these reasons, co-operative activities not only prepare for citizenship, but also promote the mental health of all. They may be stimulated by common aims without engaging in contests with other groups, but are readily increased by group contests."[8]

It may not be easy to eliminate competitive urge altogether as it is intimately connected with powerful instincts of jealousy and aggressiveness. The human urges, it is conceded, need adequate expressions. For, their

[8] P. 330.

suppression is harmful. The job of recreation is, however, not merely to provide any expression but a desirable form of expression. Recreation should not perpetuate human weakness but by sublimating human urges into morally superior channels should uplift human beings.

A healthy dose of rivalry may be necessary for the sublimation of the competitive urge and may be an effective spur for energising a group of people. The distinctive characteristic of a feeling of rivalry, however, is that it is over with the game. A game or a combination of games in which each individual has chances of making his mark in turn are useful for this purpose. Competitive games, on the other hand, mark off a few individuals as title-holders or prize-holders for a specific period of time, making the losers suffer from jealousy and inferiority complex till the period lasts.

This is not a plea against atheletic and sports championships on national or regional levels. This is merely an argument against confusing them with recreation which has a pivotal place in the Social Education movement. Besides laying emphasis on a not very desirable sentiment, the system of prizes, certificates and titles by adding formal and professional touches to the recreational activities, put pleasure and spontaneity into the background which are, in fact, their essence.

Some advantages may still be enumerated for competitive types of recreation. But they have to be set against its disadvantages which are obvious and many.

Besides changing the nature of activities, an addition to their number and variety too should partially serve the purpose. For, that may offer scope for the satisfaction of ambitions of a larger number so that if a person is eclipsed in one field, it may be possible for him to compensate it in some other field and retain a sense of equality and friendship with one who had once excelled him.

Chapter VI

ORGANISATION

The concluding statement of the last two chapters point towards the need of varied types of recreation. This should further add to the burdens of the Social Education Organiser. Lest it should come to mean jobs half done or badly done, the organisational problems, mainly from the point of view of a Social Education Organiser, are discussed below.

Though the pattern of Social Education staff somewhat varies from state to state, in most of them there are two Social Education Organisers for each block in a project. It has also been decided that out of the two, one should be a woman. It has, however, been found difficult to translate this decision into practice due to non-availability of an adequate number of women workers. The block is divided into two sections, if both of the Organisers are men. But if one of them is a woman, she looks after the Social Education work relating to only women and children and the two have to cover all the villages in the block.

Normally, the number of villages in the charge of each Organiser will be around fifty, if the block is divided geographically. In case of functional division of the block, the number of villages to be attended to by each organiser

will be around one hundred. If we take into account the long list of responsibilities entered into the job chart of the Social Education Organiser, it should be obvious that it is not possible for him to carry out Social Education work in all the villages by himself.

The Manual on Social Education makes a useful suggestion in this regard. It says, "Every Social Education Organiser needs to take one village as his own in the project area for intensive study and work. This village can be thought of as a kind of 'laboratory', where you can develop ideas and try them out. It can be a 'specimen' of village life which can be analysed in all its aspects and from which you can learn a great deal about the general life in the entire Project area."

Getting Work Done

As far as other villages are concerned, the ability of the Social Education Organiser is not to be measured by the physical strain he can impose upon himself, but by his success in getting things done. He has first of all to make a thorough study of the overall project and has to conceive the plan of his work in that context.

As this plan has to fit into a broader set of activities, the persons responsible for the latter could be induced to take up the additional responsibility of looking after and organising recreational programmes. For, they will soon

[9] P. 14.

find out that such programmes are also useful for carrying out their own activities. If a programme of *Shramdan*, for instance, is followed or accompanied by community singing, it may have an added attraction. The Social Education Organiser need not attend to each recreational activity everywhere. He has simply to suggest appropriate types of activity for appropriate occasions and find out an appropriate person to carry them out. The personnel of departments like Education, Community Development, Co-operation, Panchayats etc. may be helped to realize the value of recreation from the point of view of their own respective programmes. If certain activities are suggested to them and small technical assistance is given, they may be willing to take up the entire organisational responsibility of such programmes.

In the towns, the organisation of the Social Education work is much less uniform and adequate. As recreational needs of urban people are more acute and as Social Education organisation is more inadequate, the policy of 'getting work done' should have an added importance for Social Education Wardens, as they are called in some of the towns. Besides co-ordinating their activities with those of Municipalities, Corporations, Education Departments and other official agencies, and seeking their help, they could also work through non-official organisations like cultural, sports and dramatic clubs,

mohalla associations, trade unions, youth groups, etc. All that has to be done is to make them recreation-minded and enable them to satisfy one another's needs by acting as a co-ordinating factor between them and helping them to pool their recreational resources.

In rural areas also there are a number of non-official agencies at work some of whom may be interested or persuaded to feel interested in the recreational aspect of the life of the community they intend to serve. Some organisations could be specifically sponsored to carry on recreational work independently, with, of course, occasional guidance and within the framework of the broader plan.

Planning and Spontaneity

After thus bringing his work to manageable proportions, the Social Education Organiser has to ensure that planning is reconciled with spontaneity. Whenever a recreation is planned, the initiative should be allowed to come from the people. Let them suggest what time suits them and which activity they prefer. This is necessary not only for making recreation a training for democracy but also to make it correspond to their real needs which cannot be known better than their free expression by them.

It is conceivable that some people may not be conscious of their real needs and some may just insist on satisfaction of their urges in a

crude way at a rather base level. New suggestions may have to be given and their usefulness may have to be brought home to the people. But this should be done, as far as possible, in an indirect and friendly manner so that there should not be an impression of imposition. A genuine effort should be made to convince them that the new suggestions are in their own interest and if they reject them, the Social Education Organiser has nothing to lose.

Let us visualise a situation in which a group of people collected by the Social Education Organizer insist on playing gramophone records. For a variety of reasons he can feel that this may not serve the needs of the situation. Either the theme of the records is not very worthy or it has other disadvantages of the mass media, discussed elsewhere. But he should not refuse to discuss the suggestion. Let him readily acknowledge the need for listening to a good music. Let him simply ask, "would you like gramophone music or playing on flute by so and so or a song recital by somebody else?" If the occasion is for relaxation, a song or flute will do. If a collective action is contemplated, community singing may help in arousing the necessary enthusiasm. The point to remember is that giving full regard to spontaneity, new suggestions should be made in a subtle and indirect way. If they are put across intelligently, more often than not, they are likely to be accepted by

the people without becoming conscious of the fact that the suggestion has come from outside.

Abnormal Cases

Though individualisation should be one of the basic considerations of a recreational programme so that each individual gets full opportunity to express his preference and satisfy his needs, there are sometimes a few problem persons. As they need considerable attention, the regular programme is apt to suffer. It may, therefore, be wise to ignore them. For, though recreation is known to have been used for curing serious mental ailments, as a part of Social Education programme, it is primarily meant only for normal citizens. Much research has undoubtedly been done on recreational therapy in some advanced countries whose expert knowledge is available for various kinds of mentally and physically handicapped persons. If such experts are available in some towns in this country, such problem persons should be referred to them. Every worker should know how to recognise problem cases which need greater and different attention than the normal group. He should know where to refer such cases for treatment and should have a list of agencies available for the services of the handicapped. But as a Social Education Organiser is not expected to be a specialised expert in that sense, and as his primary duty is not to cure but to help the community to grow in an all-round manner,

it is but proper for him to attend to problems of unduly abnormal or eccentric people, only to the extent they do not affect his regular programme.

Active Participation

A democratic plan, evolved after free expression of opinions by the people concerned, should also be implemented in a democratic way so that a sense of active participation is kept alive as long as a programme lasts. Certain recreational activities, by their very nature, cannot be run without the active participation of the members of a group. Most of the traditional recreations, sports and games fall into this category. In the case of solo performances also, the audience can have a sense of participation to the extent it has a hand in the selection and organization of a programme and gets a chance to comment upon and discuss it. Suppose, a drama is proposed to be staged. Before doing it, let a number of scripts, written by local or known writers, be read before the group. Let the selection be made by them. The actors may also be selected in their presence. Finally the performance of the drama should be a subject for discussion. Though all people may not be expected to be drama critics, surely many of them would be able to give a few suggestions or tell what the drama had meant to them.

If the drama has a social purpose, it may be interesting to find the reactions of the people

and know how far its lessons are applicable to their affairs.

There is least opportunity of participation by the people in the case of mass media of recreation. For, in view of the mechanised and technical form of most of them, there is not much of a scope for passing on the responsibility of their organisation to the people and for alterations in the programme.

Mass Media

If it be necessary, on some other considerations, to have mass recreations, an effort should be made to reduce the degree of passivity of the participants. In the case of radio, an important means for mass communication, for instance, listening groups could be encouraged to start a sort of two-day traffic with the broadcasting station, by sending regular comments on the programme, communicating requests about their favourite songs to be included in what is called a "farmaish" programme, and taking part in the correspondence programme, broadcast by most of the radio stations.

During or just before malaria season, for instance, a show of a film on malaria control would be relevant and of interest to the people. An actual campaign could then follow for the eradication of mosquitoes and prevention of the disease with an active and informed participation of the people. The themes of the films and slides should be, as far as possible,

topical and respond to the interests and needs of the people of an area.

An ideal thing about the films would be that they maintain both educational and recreational values. But in many cases, the former may not be able to attract interest of people unless they are blended with recreational films. In such cases, a feature film of educative value may be preceded or followed by recreational or a cultural type of film.

Radio listening groups should be invariably organised where community sets have been given by the government. If possible they should be organised around private sets, if government sets are not available. Preferably for each feature of the radio programme, a separate group should be organised depending upon the interests of the listeners. Thus, there would be groups for, say, women's programme, children's programme, news review, agricultural or rural programme. Let each group meet for listening to each programme, the timing of which is announced beforehand, and discuss it immediately afterwards. The discussion may start with some among them narrating the salient points of the programme in his mother tongue to know how far he really understood it. The comments made in the meeting could then be passed on to the station concerned with efforts to induce a representative of, say, Radio News Reel or Rural Programme to visit the place and interview them personally.

Taking a concrete case, suppose an agricultural expert gives a talk on increasing agricultural production. The radio listening group may first like to be helped in getting knowledge about broader aspects of the problem. It may then find that some of the points raised in the talk have no relevance to the local situation while some of their problems are not mentioned in it. The real problem of the area may be marketability and not irrigation as suggested in the talk. Let this fact be noted and passed on to the radio station.

Resources

Though funds are often provided in the Social Education work for recreational activities, it is necessary to augment them with the voluntary subscription of the community for two reasons. Firstly, the funds are mostly inadequate to cover the multifaced programme of Social Education. Secondly, to the extent people can do away with outside help, they develop feelings of responsibility and self-reliance. Too much spoon-feeding in matters of pleasure getting pursuits, not only saps initiative but also defeats the purpose. For, it cannot remain very spontaneous.

People do like to spend a part of their income on entertainment and engagements. Cases are not uncommon among recreation-hungry lower urban classes of people going without meals to pay for a cinema show. Anyhow if people are convinced or learn by ex-

perience that wholesome and scientifically conceived recreations give them better satisfactions than commercial recreations do, surely the financing of the former should not be a problem.

Whatever state help is available should preferably be used for acquiring capital equipment and for non-recurring expenditure. Projectors, magic lanterns, epidiascopes, gramophones, radio sets, sports material, erection of stage for dramas, buildings of a community centre etc. are normally beyond the reach of a community and may have to be provided out of public funds. Where response is encouraging, a part of the contribution for some of them can be raised from the people. But in any case, the expenditure on day-to-day activities should always be met from the resources of the community.

The collection of funds and their custody should be entrusted to a local man reputed for his integrity. Budgets for each function should be prepared in the presence of all members of the community and all expenditures should have their approval. Accounts should be properly maintained and submitted periodically to the community meetings.

Human resources

Utilization of human resources is no less important. A Social Education worker should be able to spot out talents or potentialities for

talents and offer opportunities for their development. Every good community has its musicians, drummers, singers, dancers, *kathakars, kirtankars*, etc. and many a budding poet, writer and debater. Wherever possible, they should be preferred to the imported professional and mechanized entertainers. If a local singer is available, a gramophone record need not be played. If proper encouragement and help are given, local script-writers and actors may produce good plays.

The tendency to professionalise and modernise some of the traditional activities should be resisted. Such attempts not only mar the authenticity and simplicity of the traditional style but also reduce its recreational value. Participants can enjoy themselves only in amateurish and natural forms. Elaborate stage settings, curtains, costumes, etc. should, therefore, be avoided for dramatic performances. Incidentally, this should also mean some economy in expenditure.

Symbolic Integration

The Social Education movement is not an isolated thing but is an integral part of a wider socio-economic movement. In rural life that integration is represented by the person of Gram Sevak and the place of Community Centre. Apart from sufficient practical considerations, association of all recreational work with them is also important for a psychological appreciation of the integrated approach.

One of the first responsibilities of a Social Education Organiser is to establish a Community Centre. To start with, it is to be located in the village chosen by him for intensive work, to be extended, as soon as possible, to the villages where headquarters of the Gram Sevaks are located, and finally to the rest of the villages. The venue of the Centre may be a *chaupal*, a *dharamshala*, a *panchayat ghar* or a room in the local school or an independent building, if funds locally raised or departmentally available, permit. A model plan suggested in the Manual on Social Education issued by the Community Project Administration, provides, besides other things, for "a platform to serve as a stage, a green room where dramatic performances are arranged, a large enough hall for audience and sufficient land for locating playgrounds."

There may be some small advantage in shifting venues for various activities but they are outweighed by the value of continued association with the same place which builds up attachments with the programmes represented by it.

The Gram Sevak, on the other hand, represents the converging point of rural activities of most of the departments. It is difficult to define precisely his points of contact with the Social Education programme. It may be more correct to say that his entire work should be permeated with the Social Education approach.

The Gram Sevak is supposed to be "responsible for setting up organisations in the villages for executing Social Education programmes under the guidance and with the help of the Social Education Organiser from time to time."[10] But actual relations between the two and the amount of Social Education work the Gram Sevak can take upon himself, will depend upon the type of individuals as well as the conditions obtaining in each particular area. What is important is that in the recreational activities of the Social Education programme, the Gram Sevak should be associated, as far as possible.

In urban life, there are very few integrating factors. Even in Social Education work there are a large number of agencies and the key problem, according to the first Five Year Plan, is to co-ordinate their activities. For this purpose, it suggests the formation of city or town social education councils, consisting of the representatives of the various agencies operating there. But the subsequent plans do not seem to have paid more attention to the problem. The problem of overall integration in the towns, of course, tends to defy solution and would need the attention of wider forces than that of social educationists.

[10] Manual of Social Education, Community Project Administration, Government of India.

Chapter VII

LEADERSHIP

The role of leadership in recreational programmes and in the life of a community is so crucial as to entitle it this separate and concluding chapter of the booklet. The success of a programme of recreation depends upon as well as builds up leadership in a community, so essential for strengthening democracy at the roots.

In a chapter entitled "Leadership and Democracy are Compatible", of the proceedings of the American Association for the Study of Group Work, (1941) the title of the chapter is convincingly proved.[11] Leadership is perhaps a shade more necessary for order and stability in a democracy than in totalitarian countries. For, a monolithic party and an all-powerful state can sometimes ensure order and stability in the latter.

The essence of democratic leadership, as also of democracy according to Schumpeter, is that the people have the opportunity of accepting or rejecting their leaders.[12] It also implies that the relations of the leader with his followers are not based on authority and submission.

Another virtue of democratic leadership is its pluralistic character, i.e. a variety of

[11] Pp. 26-31.
[12] Cf. Capitalism, Socialism, Democracy.

leadership systems. In a totalitarian country, a political leader is also assumed to be an authority on science, arts, and, in fact, on every conceivable field of human knowledge. But in a democracy, the autonomy of each field, notwithstanding their interdependence, is respected so that each throws up its natural leaders.

Recreation, it would appear, meets the twin tests of democratic leadership in an ample measure. A recreational activity implies absence of coercion, and the leadership that evolves out of it has to be based on a free consent of the participants. Moreover, by breaking a near monolithic hierarchical system in our social life and by providing variety in its programmes, recreation offers scope for plural and reciprocal forms of leadership, i.e. a leadership which is multi-sided and in which leaders and followers can interchange their relations. In the social life of rural India an MLA or his local agent, often representing the dominant caste, and a revenue officer, Tehsildar or his subordinate, represent broadly two systems of authority, political and administrative. Leadership thrown up by recreational activities can add another focus or foci of prestige and popularity by promoting functional leadership as against status leadership. It may thus help in avoiding concentration of power, on the one hand, and the tendency of total submission, on the other.

Leadership is necessary for the success of any group activity and hence of most of the recreations. Without a leader, groups tend to disintegrate not only for want of organization and guidance but also for lack of psychological sense of unity which the leader symbolises.

While recognising this need, the job chart for the Social Education Organisers enjoins upon them to stimulate local leadership and to utilise where it exists; to develop leadership and to train village people for leadership. Care should, however, be taken to ensure that leaders are not chosen in a formal way. Elections, votings etc. should be avoided. In a natural process of evolution, responsibilities should be increasingly entrusted to a person or persons enjoying unanimous or near unanimous acceptance.

Besides wide acceptance, the leaders are also expected to possess certain technical qualifications particularly in the form of some skill in the activities they are to supervise and organise. A scheme of formal training in village leadership is already being implemented in certain areas.

Another peculiarity of recreational leadership is in its relation between the leaders and the followers which is not only not fixed and permanent, but is also in many cases interchangeable. A leader of, say, an intellectual activity may have to work under the leadership of one of his followers in another activity involving superior physical faculties. And

both may require the leadership of another person in another type of activity which needs better capacity for raising funds and attending to organisational matters.

Though opportunities for free discussion of all problems should not be circumscribed, a capable leader may sometimes be able to cut short the need for endless argumentation on petty matters of details of an organisational problem. Though frivolous discussions of this sort are often confused with democracy, actually they tend to discourage the faith of the people in democratic methods and in group activity. By posing the issue in a clearer form, the attention of the participants can be diverted to essential and central problems and they can be helped to keep the discussion at a certain level. This implies a capacity, on the part of the leaders, to maintain a minimum amount of discipline as also to show some firmness on certain occasions.

The achievements of a Social Education Organiser, particularly in the field of recreation, to a large measure depend upon his ability to find out and develop appropriate leadership at every level of activity and his relations with it. He must realize that his own role is neither of a leader nor of a leader of leaders. The job of a Social Educator is to create or stimulate a leader and enable him to perform his function effectively by giving him suitable assistance.

The success of recreational programme should not thus be measured by the popularity or indispensability of a Social Education Organiser in an area. It should rather be reflected in his capacity to deputise his work and enable the community to carry on its activities without a direct and active help from him. For, it is good for him as well as for the community. By sharing part of his responsibilities with the leaders of a community, a Social Education worker can attend to larger and hitherto neglected spheres of his work. The advantages to the community too are two-fold. Firstly, in a self-organized recreational activities there is more scope for spontaneity and active participation ensuring more enjoyment and usefulness to the community. Secondly to the extent a community becomes self-reliant and is able to stand on its own legs, the real objective of social education is achieved.

Let it, however, be added that as the task of democratic leadership is no less arduous than that of authoritarian leadership so is indirect supervisory role not easier than that of direct guidance. Indeed in both cases superior skills are required. For neither democratic leadership nor indirect supervision mean abdication of responsibility. They simply mean responsibility with a better sense of discrimination and a fuller awareness of limitations.

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